



SB 938 An Act Concerning Unemployment Benefits for Striking Workers

Good afternoon Senator Kushner, Representative Sanchez, ranking members, and members of the Labor Committee. My name is Stephen Wierbicki and I am the Secretary for AFSCME Council 4, Local 269 which represents workers at the Department of Labor. I have 29 years of experience working in the Department of Labor and I work in the Middletown appeals division office as a Principal Appeals Referee.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 938, An Act Concerning Unemployment Benefits for Striking Workers. Under current law, striking workers are prohibited from collecting unemployment benefits. This bill would allow for these workers to collect unemployment benefits after a two-week waiting period. Expanding unemployment benefits for striking workers would also bring us in line with New York and New Jersey who provide this to striking workers.

The Department of Labor would also be able to provide this benefit to striking workers utilizing existing resources. When workers are locked out by management during a labor dispute we are able to code them and provide unemployment benefits. Workers on strike deserve the same benefits extended to them. It is important that workers still have a wage, even though it is less than they normally receive, during labor disputes instead of having to go weeks without a paycheck. I urge the committee to support SB 938.